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# THE PATRON's A. B. C.

By Bruce of Kinnaird

BRITISH MUSEUM

England Divines, Assembly of

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# THE PATRON's A, B, C:

## OR, THE SHORTER CATECHISM

Attempted after a New PLAN, and more adapted to the present STATE of the CHURCH.

Particularly containing an ABSTRACT, both Doctrinal and Historical, of PATRONAGE, from the Reformation till the present Times.

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Intended for the Benefit of those who are of a more advanced Capacity.

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Heb. v. 14. *Strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

*——ridentem dicere verum*
*Quis vetat——* HOR.

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M, DCC, LXXI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

# THE

# PATRON's A, B, C, &c.

Queſt. WHAT is the chief end of a *modern clergyman?*

A. A *modern clergyman*'s chief end is, to ſerve the *Patron*, and his friends, that he may in due time be found worthy to receive and enjoy a *benefice*, or be advanced to a better *place* through his favour.

Q. What rule has the *Patron* given to direct modern clergymen how they may *ſerve* him, and *enjoy* their *benefice?*

A. The *law* of the *land*, which is contained in the *new ſtatute* of *Queen Ann* of Great Britain, reſtoring *patronage* about ſixty years ago, in connexion with the *old canon law* of the *Pope* of Rome, eſtabliſhing it, more than ſome ſix hundred years ago, as both theſe are enforced by the preſent *judicatories* of this country, whether *civil* or *eccleſiaſtic*, is the only rule to direct *modern clergymen* how they may ſerve the Patron, and enjoy, or meliorate their *livings*.

Q. Has the law of *patronage* been from the beginning the rule to direct clergymen in the general concerns of the church?

A. No; for the five or ſix firſt centuries, clergymen had the *word* of *God*, the *law* of

*Chriſt*, and the *edification* and comfort of the *people*, which is Chriſt's body, as their *ſtatute law*, to which they were bound to give implicit obedience: But as the *Pope* and *patronage* increaſed in power and glory, the word of God, and law of Chriſt proportionably decreaſed; till at laſt his *holineſs*, finding them to be altogether incompatible with his own dignity, and ſovereign popeſhip, fairly diſcarded them, as obſolete and pernicious ſtatutes, out of his *ſyſtem* of *church-government*. And though the *Patrons* have now taken this bone of patronage out of his teeth, in this country, yet, as they diſcover themſelves to this day fully as fond of keeping it to themſelves as ever he was, the poor *Chriſtian people*, after all, inſtead of being freed from, do only ſay that they have changed, their *tyrant*.

Q. What are the *doctrines* principally taught by the *major part* of our preſent *church-judicatories*?

A. The principal *doctrine* of the times, in our preſent *church-judicatories*, is *implicit faith* in the almighty power of *Patrons*, and *implicit obedience* to whatever they ſhall require of us: Or, that we believe concerning the *Patron*, that he is able to do all things, and that the moſt dangerous of all hereſies is, to refuſe, or diſpute whatever he requires of us.

Q. What is a *Patron*?

A. A *Patron* is a Proteſtant *Pope*, Chriſt's *vicar*, and ſupreme *head* of his body the church, in *England* and *Scotland*; infallible,

abſolute, incontroulable; of wiſdom, which none dare call in queſtion; of power, which none can reſiſt; of holineſs, ſuch as becomes the eldeſt ſon of the Pope of Rome; of juſtice, goodneſs, and truth, juſt as *ſelf-intereſt*, or the *ſollicitation* of *friends* happen at the time to preponderate.

Q. Are there more *Patrons* than one?

A. In number they are many, and various; in mark and power, they are all one, and the ſame.

Q. What are the decrees of a *Patron?*

A. The decrees of a *Patron* are certain ſovereign and pontifical *bulls*, known by the vulgar name of *preſentations*, iſſued forth from his ſupreme tribunal, according to the counſel of his own will; whereby for his own *pleaſure*, or *profit*, he fore-ordains the ſettlement of pariſhes, and the food of Chriſt's flock; together with whatſoever ſhall come to paſs, in *church-judicatories*, reſpecting the ſame.

Q. How doth a Patron execute his decrees?

A. A Patron executeth his decrees in his works of creation and providence.

Q. What is a Patron's work of creation?

A. A Patron's work of creation is, his calling forth into being all things neceſſary for food, lodging, and clothes, to ſome *poor preacher*, who had juſt nothing before; and that by the *word* of his *power*, within the ſpace of ſix months; and his making all of the above very good and effectual to his *Preſentee* againſt all deadly.

Q. How doth a Patron make all things very good and effectual to his *Preſentee* againſt all deadly?

A. After a Patron has iſſued his decree of *preſentation*, he makes all things very good and effectual to his *Preſentee*; *Firſt*, By making all things nothing, that ſtand in oppoſition to his ſettlement: *Secondly*, By making all things out of nothing, that can contribute towards the advancing it, and render the effect of his own decree infallible.

Q. How doth a Patron make all things nothing, that ſtand in oppoſition to his *Preſentee*'s ſettlement?

A. A Patron makes all things nothing that ſtand in oppoſition to his *Preſentee*, by muſtering up a *faction* of *lay-elders*, his own friends and dependents, in every Aſſembly, ſupported and hounded on by a prevalent party of venal and corrupt *clergy*, who fail not to bawl out, upon every occaſion, the *laws* of the *land*—the hereditary, indefeaſible, inexorable right of *Patrons*—the neceſſity of *non-reſiſtance* and *paſſive obedience*—that all things would go into immediate confuſion, and the world, in an inſtant, fall off its hinges, if the *people* were to be but allowed the ſmalleſt voice in the *choice* and *nomination* of their own *miniſter*—— in ſhort, that ten thouſand objections, or ten thouſand objectors, againſt a Patron, or his Preſentee, are juſt *nothing*, becauſe juſt *good* for nothing; the Patron's *gift*, and Preſentee's *acceptance*, having the ſame force as that

of an equation in *Algebra*, where all is brought over to the one ſide, and nothing at all left on the other.

Q. How doth a Patron make all things out of nothing to promote his *Preſentee's* ſettlement, and render the effect of his own decree infallible?

A. When a Patron has once iſſued his infallible decree, he is at no loſs to make any thing out of any thing, or every thing out of nothing, at his own will and pleaſure, to favour his *Preſentee*. He can change *perſons* and *things*, and *times*, and *laws*, at his will; for theſe are all given into his hand, (Dan. vii. 25.)——Though his *Preſentee*, therefore, be the arranteſt blockhead that ever obtained a degree in any of the four *univerſities*, he can inſtantly dub him the brighteſt genius of the age, the very Pink of erudition, and Phœnix of literature.——Though this *Preſentee* may be better acquainted with *Baile's Dictionary* than his *Bible*: and as for ſyſtems of divinity, perhaps never read through the *Weſtminſter Confeſſion*, or larger *Catechiſm* in his life; yet a *Patron* can pronounce him at once, the moſt flaming pattern of orthodoxy and piety in the church.——Though, in point of *gifts*, and *qualifications*, a *Preſentee* may be juſt equal to the taſk of teaching a few ſchool-boys to conſtrue Horace; unfit to ſpeak, or uncapable of being heard, beyond the third pew of a large houſe; yet the Patron, by his

ſole pontifical *imprimatur*, ſhall find him ſufficiently *gifted* for undertaking the moſt *numerous* and *important* charge in Scotland: and what is more, the poor *Preſentee*, like the Jack-Daw in the fable, ſhall begin to think it is indeed ſo with him, as his Patron and friends affect to give out, and may be ſeen henceforth ſtrutting with all the ridiculous vanity and conceit of an old maid when ſhe is flattered. ——Though a *Preſentee*'s *call* be only ſigned by a Patron's own *factor*, and ground-*officer*; or a few ſuch as are well known never to diſpute the counſel of the Patron's will; yet the Patron can, by his ſole *creative* power, make this to ſtart forth a *full* and *ſufficient call* of a whole pariſh, though conſiſting of many thouſands;——nay, he ſhall uphold it a *call* to all intents and purpoſes, as good and valid, as if ſigned by every ſoul in the pariſh, if not a better:——nay, what is ſtill more, it ſhall be found ſo, by a *majority* of every *kirk-court* before whom it ſhall come; for he has only to ſay to them, *Let this be a call, and ſo it ſhall be.*——Though a Patron ſhall neglect to lodge his *preſentation* with a *preſbytery*, till the very laſt day allowed him by *law*, and though that day ſhall happen to be a *Sabbath*, and though neither the *laws* nor *judges* of the land would allow him, as a private proſecutor, to proteſt a bill of 1000 *l.* upon that day, even at the hazard of loſing the whole ſum; yet by his own pontifical *ſupremacy*, over all *times*, as well as *things* ſacred, he ſhall convert that *Sabbath* in-

to a day of *buſineſs*, of worldly buſineſs, (for ſuch, God knows, *preſentations* are with a witneſs) *pro re nata*, in order to give his *Preſentee* full inveſtiture of his *benefice*.——Though neither a *Patron*'s own word, and ſimple averment, nor that of his *agent*, when contradicted, and a proof called for by the oppoſite party, would, in ordinary caſes of civil proceſs, go any further than another man's (that is, juſt for nothing); yet his mere *word* as Patron, however ſolemnly denied, or called in queſtion, ſhall, in the caſe of a *preſentation*, bring clearer proof, than thouſands of witneſſes, notaries public, or proteſts; and no court, civil or eccleſiaſtic, will dare to ſay otherwiſe, or once move the lip againſt his ſovereign *ipſe dixit*.———In fine, though a Patron be directly charged with *colluſion* in executing a *ſham-deed* of *diſpoſition* of his *right* of *patronage*, to evade the *laws* of the land;—though it is objected, that this *ſham-deed* of *diſpoſition* is further in itſelf *null* and *void*; becauſe he being but an *heir* of *entail*, cannot *diſpone* or *alienate* any *property* whatever, without an act of Parliament;—nay, though to all this it be added, that his deed of *diſpoſition* is directly *ſimoniacal*, becauſe executed *after* the vacancy to which its refers, had commenced;—yet all this, and a thouſand times more, ſhall not be found once to ſcratch the ſurface of the *Patron's* impregnable buckler.——The law of *Patrons*, like the law of *Parliament*,

is above the *laws* of the *land*. *Parliament-men* only know the law of Parliament, and *Patrons* only know the law of Patrons. The *judges* of *ordinary* law, cannot, will not, dare not *intermeddle* here, far leſs contradict; for it would be—*Sutor ultra crepidam* *. The Patron is a law to himſelf; and whatever he *does* or *ſays* muſt be a law, juſt becauſe he *does* or *ſays* it. In ſhort, *heaven and earth* may *paſs away*, but one jota of the *Patron*'s *plenitude* of power muſt not paſs away; for he is *exceeding dreadful*, his *teeth* are *of iron*, *and his nails of braſs*, *which devoureth*, and *breaketh in pieces*, and *ſtampeth the reſidue with his feet*, Matth. xxiv. 35. Dan. vii. 19.

Q. What are a Patron's works of providence?

A. A Patron's works of providence are his powerful, and political preſervation, and government of all his creatures, and all their actions.

Q. What do you mean by a Patron's *creatures*?

A. A Patron's *creatures* are to be found both among the *layety*, and among the *clergy*. Among the layety, they are generally a ſet of young lawyers, writers, and attorneys, cuſtom-

* *Vide* the printed Caſes in a late remarkable Proceſs of Declarator,—the Pr——ty of Pa——y, againſt Mr Da—d Er——ne Writer to the Signet, and Doer for L—d Bl——re, Patron of Er——ne, —decided Summer 1770.

houſe and exciſe-officers, penſioners, or expectants of poſts or penſions, factors, ſycophants, and other ſuch appendiges of Patrons. Among the *clergy*, they are principals, profeſſors, deans, chaplains, almoners, tragedians, hiſtoriographers, harmony-writers, authors, philoſophers, virtuoſi, connoiſſeurs, wits, buffoons, horſe-jockeys, and the like; expectants alſo of principalities, profeſſorſhips, penſions, augmentations, tranſlations, royal-bounty *tickets*, and *northern viaticums*, with an endleſs train of ſuch kind of ſycophants, and venal appendiges of the *high-prieſt* and rulers.

Q. Wherein conſiſteth the Patron's powerful and political preſervation of all theſe his creatures?

A. The Patron very politically exerts his utmoſt addreſs and diligence, in preſerving a ſure ſucceſſion in the church, of theſe, and ſuch like, venal and mean-ſpirited *creatures*. For which purpoſe, he beſtows his *gifts* and favours upon none, but ſuch as he is well aſſured are friends to *deſpotiſm* and *arbitrary* government, whom he knows he can afterwards ſafely lay his hands upon, whenever he has any *violent* meaſure to carry into execution. He admits none to his good graces, but thro' the recommendation of theſe, of whoſe attachment to his perſon and intereſt he is certain, by a long experience of their unlimited ſubmiſſion, and conſciences hackney'd in his ſervice. He takes care to have a proper number of *lay-elders*, of his own recommendation, ad-

mitted from time to time, by ſuch ſeſſions, where he knows the *miniſters* are his devoted *ſlaves*. No matter what the character or qualification of theſe *elders* be for their office, in every truly religious and important view; if they are only determined *minions* of the Patron, and reſolute to ſpeak, and vote ſteady under his banner, whatever their moral, or religious character, or practice, has been, is, or ſhall be, as this no wiſe concerneth the Patron, ſo the *obſequious* miniſter firſt ſhuts his eyes, and then *ſees* no evil.——What though few of theſe are ever found viſiting the ſick, or praying over them? Perhaps they ſeldom pray at all!—What though they never ſerve at the Lord's table? Perhaps they ſeldom ſit there! —What though they have no family-worſhip? Perhaps they have no family:—Or, if they have a family, perhaps they have no *chaplain*: —Or, if they have a *chaplain*, perhaps he too is a *gentleman*, and above ſaying prayers. And thus the Patron makes and preſerves his *creatures*.

Q. How doth the Patron govern all theſe his creatures, and all their actions?

A. The *Patron* governs all theſe his *creatures*, and all their actions, much in the ſame manner, as the *Grand Seignior* does his *janiſaries*. He takes care to have them all arranged and marſhalled, with proper *ſubalterns*, ready upon every occaſion for action, and diſciplined with *Pruſſian* exactneſs, under one great and leading *captain-aga*, or *muſter-ma-*

*ſter-general*, who is ordinarily ſome *chief-prieſt*, reſident in Edinburgh, and who is ſure of a *principality*, or *penſion*, or ſometimes (if he is very lucky) of both, for his trouble; over and above his ordinary emoluments as a clergyman of the city, and beſides incidental expences.——When, therefore, at any time, the *nod* of the Patron determines the leader to call them forth to action, they are collected from the *Orkneys* to *Port-Patrick*, as the *locuſts*, numerous, and in bands, darkning the ſun, and making the earth a wilderneſs, where-ever they move.—Lamentable are the devaſtations they have already made in many of the moſt fertile *provinces* of the land, and mournful the proſpect of what lies yet before them!——

Q. Are theſe *creatures* of the Patron free or neceſſary agents?

A. The Patron's *creatures*, in ſpeculation, take all to the ſide of *free-will*, and *Arminianiſm*, running down the doctrines of *predeſtination* and abſolute decrees, with the moſt abuſive torrent of obloquy: But in practice they are the arranteſt *Neceſſitarians* in the world, being in every word and action mechanically determined by the *nod* of their leader, according as the Patron has pre-concerted and ordained whatſoever they are to bring to paſs.

Q. What ſpecial act of providence does the *Patron* exerciſe towards young *candidates* and

*probationers*, when he brings them, by a *preſentation*, into the eſtate of actual *creatures*?

A. When the Patron, by his preſentation, brings a *preacher* into the full eſtate of one of his *creatures*, he enters into a *covenant* with him; ſometimes, for a ſum of *money* to be inſtantly paid by himſelf, or friends; at other times, for a draught of credit upon ſome *county-voter*, againſt the next *elections*; at other times, that he ſhall proſecute no *augmentation*, to the detriment of the Patron's *tithes*; at other times, that he ſhall undertake to ſpeak kindly to, and comfort ſome diſtant relation, or favourite houſekeeper, for his *honour*'s ſake; but at no time, without the previous indiſpenſible *condition* of perfect and implicit *obedience* to all his future orders: forbidding him, under the higheſt pains and penalties, to touch, taſte, or handle, of the fruit of the *tree* of *knowlege*, with the fanatical *high-fliers*, who profeſs to pity the miſeries of the poor *Chriſtian people*, and who would wiſh to protect or deliver them from his cruel antichriſtian tyranny and oppreſſion.

Q. Did our *forefathers* continue in the eſtate under which they were brought by the *Patrons*?

A. Our *forefathers*, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from this eſtate, by *ſinning* againſt the *Patron*.

Q. What is ſin?

A. From the preſent moſt approved practice of our General Aſſemblies, one would be in-

clined to conclude, that in our day there can be no other ſin, but either ſome want of conformity unto, or tranſgreſſion of the *law* of *patronage* *.

Q. What was the ſin whereby our *forefathers* fell from the eſtate under which the *Patrons* had brought them?

A. The ſin, whereby our *forefathers* fell from the eſtate under which the Patrons had brought them, was a certain *incurable biaſs*, and *evil inclination*, to eat of the *forbidden*

* *Vide* the caſe of Mr Th——s G—ll—ie, *late miniſter* of Car—ck, who was *depoſed* by the Aſſ——ly 1752, for a very ſimple act of *diſreſpect* to the *ſovereign will* of a *Patron*; (namely, his declining to be preſent at the *ſettlement* of his *Preſentee*;) but never yet *reſtored*, after 18 years deprivation, though often moved for, in different Aſſ—lies—compared—with the caſe of Mr Th—s St—t, *preſent miniſter* of Cr—f, who was *depoſed* by the Synod of P—th and St——g, for the crime of *notour* and *exceſſive drunkenneſs*, in the year 1768, or 1769; but *inſtantly reſtored* to his *miniſterial character*, and *dignity*, by the Aſſ——ly 1770; becauſe *exceſſive drunkenneſs* is either no crime at all in a *clergyman*, or (what amounts to the ſame thing) is a crime of ſuch a nature, as renders it *impoſſible* to be *proven* againſt a *clergyman*, nay *inadmiſſible* that *proof* ſhould be *offered*, or *accuſers* or *parties* ſo much as, at any time, *allowed* a *hearing*, on a ſubject ſo *glaringly invidious* and *irrelevant*—with many other *ſimilar* caſes.

*fruit* of the *free* and *unreſtrained choice* of their own *paſtors*.

Q. In what way did this *incurable biaſs* and *evil inclination* of our forefathers to eat of the *forbidden fruit* of chooſing their own *miniſters* chiefly diſcover itſelf?

A. The incurable biaſs of our forefathers to eat of the forbidden fruit, of the free choice of their own miniſters, chiefly manifeſted itſelf, in a moſt obſtinate and unremitting outcry againſt, what they called, the *oppreſſion* of *patronage*, as an *intolerable antichriſtian grievance* and yoke, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear; and in their graſping at every favourable opportunity of getting rid of it: as the records both of church and ſtate do ſet forth in every period, ſince the reformation.

Q. Can you give any particular account of this obſtinate and unremitting outcry of our forefathers againſt the Patrons, or of that perverſe and evil inclination they were poſſeſſed of, to eat this fruit, ſo ſtrictly forbidden them by the *Pope* and *Patron?*

A. The hiſtory of this church and nation, ſince the very firſt dawn of the reformation till this preſent day, is indeed little elſe but the hiſtory of one continued outcry and ſtruggle, begun firſt by our *forefathers*, and carried on by their deluded poſterity with various fortune, during the ſpace of two complete centuries, againſt the ſovereign and ſalutary law of patronage.——It is the opinion of many learned

men, that the fruit of the tree of knowlege of good and evil, forbidden our first parents by God himself in paradise, was impregnated with a certain poisonous, intoxicating and infectious quality, which having once given a wrong bias to the animal spirits and humours of the human body in the persons of Adam and Eve, has not ceased to transfuse itself with increasing fermentation through the whole of their numerous posterity. In like manner, the luscious and intoxicating poison of *liberty*, imbibed by our *forefathers* in their first struggles against *popish tyranny* and *oppression*, at which time they were first unluckily *tempted* to taste of the *forbidden fruit* of the *free choice* of their own *ministers*, seems to have leavened the whole lump of their posterity, with a still accumulating and increasing madness: For their minds, being once infected with this *vitious* inclination, nothing has been ever since found capable of convincing them, from father to son, of the justice and equity of the *patronage law*. They have persevered in exclaiming against it on every occasion, as the most *sacrilegious usurpation* over the church and house of God, and the most *arbitrary infringement* of the liberties and privileges of a free people. Nay, so very mad and obstinate have they shown themselves in this respect, that the world cannot convince them to this day, that *patronage* is any thing else but *popery* in disguise; nay, that the *Patrons* are not even worse than the *Pope*; for the Patrons, at the same time that

they pretend to deliver the people and church from the tyranny of the *Pope*, are bringing them under an equal bondage to themſelves.

Q. Did the whole nation fall in this firſt tranſgreſſion of our *forefathers?*

A. The ſpirit and complexion of the *rulers* of the nation, whether in *church* or *ſtate*, have indeed, *to their honour*, appeared diſpoſed, at different periods, and as the times have altered, to reform themſelves from that egregious error of their forefathers, in aſſuming a right to diſpute the omnipotency of patronage; and quietly, as becometh peaceable ſubjects, to lay down every weapon of rebellion, againſt their *liege-lord*, the *Patron*.—But as for the nation itſelf, it is not to be denied, that they have ever uniformly remained one and the ſame, father and ſon in the ſame unreaſonable, perverſe and obſtinate inclination, towards the the ſame ſinful non-conformity unto, or tranſgreſſion of the law of patronage, from the very firſt openings of the reformation under the lowring banner of the rough and inflexible *John Knox*, who feared not to force tears from the eyes of *majeſty* itſelf, to this preſent day, under the benign auſpices of the more pliant and courtly Dr Ro———n, who enjoys a penſion for having wiped them away †. In this,

† D –r Ro——n, in his Hiſtory of Scotland, very politely draws a veil over all the female errors, moral as well as political, of Mary queen of Scots; on account of which, together with *other ſervices*, done and to be done, the E—l of B—te procured

it muſt be allowed, the nation has preſerved a ſtrict uniformity, under all its revolutions; in proſperity or adverſity; in times peaceable, or perſecuting; in peace, or war. The fathers eat the ſour grape, the childrens teeth are ſtill on edge. And all the endeavours of the Patrons, and their abettors, whether in the church or in the ſtate, to correct this perverſe humour, have uniformly produced, even to this preſent day, the quite contrary effect, by increaſing, inſtead of abating, their obſtinacy; and inflaming, inſtead of ſlackning their zeal. Witneſs for this the many *Seceding* and *Relief* meeting-houſes, erected and ſtill erecting thro' every corner of the land! Witneſs for this, a Muckart! a Kirk of Shots! a Glendovan! a St Ninians! with numberleſs others already *emptied*, or in a fair way of being ſo, through the ſame channel.

Q. Can you point out the time of the firſt actual out-breaking, or open tranſgreſſion, by which our forefathers diſcovered their irreconcileable hatred to patronage, and obſtinate, perverted inclination to ſubſtitute their own free-will, in the choice of a miniſter, in place of the Patron's ſovereign and infallible law?

A. Our forefathers, in the *paroxiſms* of their diſtempered zeal, ſcrupled not to affirm, that the *people*'s free choice of their own miniſter, was a matter as ancient as the *apoſtle*'s days.—

procured for him the *penſioned* office he preſently enjoys of 300l. *per annum*.

That under the *Old Teſtament*, indeed, God had choſen for himſelf a particular family and tribe to be his prieſts and miniſters, who therefore held the ſacred office by birthright and inheritance—through their generations.—That our Lord had, in like manner, by his own ſovereign authority, as *head* of his church, choſen twelve apoſtles, and ſet them apart to the ſacred office, to become his miniſters and ſervants;—but that ſince our Lord, no man upon earth, how great ſoever, Pope, Patron, or Biſhop, had the right of choice or nomination of office-bearers in the church of Chriſt.—That the *Patron*'s claim to be *Chriſt*'s *vicar*, in creating *paſtors* and *miniſters*, was equally unſcriptural and antichriſtian with that of the *Pope*.—That our LORD, when he aſcended on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, had left this a *free* and precious *legacy* to his people and church, which none might, or could deprive them of, it being a part of the liberty wherewith he had made them free.—That the very choice of *Matthias*, as one of the apoſtles, to ſucceed in the place from which Judas, by his tranſgreſſion, had fallen, was by the *free* and equal *election* of the *people*, *i. e.* the diſciples then profeſſing the faith of Chriſt; under this ſpeciality indeed, that the diſciples appointed two, of whom the Holy Ghoſt, by particular revelation, was pleaſed to declare for one *.—That Stephen and the other deacons were choſen in like manner, by the whole mul-

* Acts i. 23,—26.

titude of the disciples, and that before the apostles themselves presumed to lay hands upon them *.—That, in short, in the same way, Paul and Barnabas ordained, by *election* (χειροτονησαντες), elders in every church †.—They said that patronage was but a late *invention* in the church.—That it was *contrived* by men of worldly minds, for *carnal* and prophane ends, to advance their power, or gratify their pride and covetousness;—and that it was not at all known in the christian church, till many ages after the apostles, when it crept in with the other *sorceries* of *antichrist* from Rome, that mother of harlots and abominations in the earth.——Thus would they dispute, in the ravings of their zeal, against patronage, not even fearing to bring every railing accusation against it.

As to the first actual out-breaking and open transgression, by which our forefathers discovered their irreconcileable antipathy to patronage, and obstinate inclination to have the free choice of their own pastors, this was coeval with their very first attempts of the reformation, during the whole progress of which, they failed not to connect *patronage* at all times with *popery*; and to point the whole artillery of their *national reformation* conjunctly against both, as being both equally corruptions of the church and law of Christ. To this purpose we find them so early as in the *books* of *discipline*, both the first and the second, as far

* Acts vi. 5,—6. † Acts xiv. 23.

*back* as *about* the 1570, now 200 years ago, to be full, loud, and determined in this their perverſe and wrong-headed doctrine of the *liberty* of the *people* to choice their own *miniſters*, and the intolerable uſurpation and incroachment of *patronage* upon the rights of Chriſtians.

Q. Can you point out the particular expreſſions in theſe *books* of *diſcipline*, which aſſert the *right* of the *people* to *elect* their own miniſter, and to have none *obtruded* upon them by *Patrons*?

A. We meet with this doctrine almoſt in every page: *e. g.* 1 book, chap. iv. entitled, "The miniſtry." "No man ſhould enter in "the miniſtry, without a lawful vocation. "Lawful vocation conſiſteth in the *election* of "the people, examination of the miniſtry, "and admiſſion by them both.—No miniſter "ſhould be obtruded upon any particular kirk, "without their conſent.—Neither for rarity of "men, neceſſity of teaching, nor for any cor-"ruption of time, ſhould unable perſons be "admitted into the miniſtry.——In their ad-"miſſion the office and duty of miniſters and "people ſhould be declared by ſome godly mi-"niſter,—and ſo, publicly, before the people, "ſhould they be placed in their kirks *at the de-"ſire of the ſame*."—But the 2 *book* is more loud and clamorous; thus chap. 12. entitled, "Cer-"tain ſpecial heads of reformation which *we* "crave."—"The liberty of the election of per-"ſons called to the eccleſiaſtical function, and

" obſerved without interruption, ſo long as the
" kirk was not corrupted by *antichriſt*, we
" deſire to be reſtored and retained within this
" realm; ſo that none be *obtruded* upon any
" congregation, either by the Prince, or any
" inferior perſon, without lawful election, and
" the *aſſent* of the people, over whom the
" perſon is placed, as the practice of the apo-
" ſtolical and primitive kirk, and good order
" crave. And becauſe this order which God's
" word craves, cannot ſtand with *patronage*, and
" *preſentation* to benefices, uſed in the *Pope*'s
" kirk, we deſire all them that *truly fear* God,
" earneſtly to conſider, that foraſmuch as the
" names of *patronages*, and *benefices*, together
" with the effect thereof, have flown from the
" *Pope* and corruption of the *canon law* only,
" in ſo far as any perſon was *intruded* or pla-
" ced over kirks, having the care of ſouls: And
" foraſmuch as that manner of proceeding has
" no manner of ground in the *word* of *God*,
" but is *contrary* to the ſame, and to the ſaid
" liberty of *election*, they ought not now to
" have place in this *light* of reformation. And
" therefore, whoſoever will embrace God's
" word, and deſire the kingdom of his Son
" Jeſus Chriſt to be advanced, they will alſo
" embrace and receive that polity and order,
" which the word of God, and upright ſtate of
" his church do crave, otherwiſe it is in vain
" that they have profeſſed the ſame."

Q. Did theſe *books* of *diſcipline*, ſo crammed with principles and aſſertions derogatory to the

right and ſovereignty of *Patrons*, appear only as the wrong-headed reveries of a few, or were they the public avowed ſenſe of the nation?

A. It cannot be denied, that ſo far from being the private production of a few, they were prepared and publiſhed with the general conſent of the whole nation; and being drawn up at the very time of its firſt ſtruggles againſt *popery*, have been uniformly allowed to contain the real, (however in this article miſtaken) ſentiments of the whole of our *firſt reformers*: nay, it muſt be allowed, that the more zealous friends of *preſbytery* have not only, at all times, looked upon them as the *baſis* of the *reformation*, but even to this day aſſert them to be the original *magna charta* of the church of Scotland. Moreover, as the reformation advanced, it is no leſs true, that theſe very *books* of *diſcipline* were publicly approven of by many ſucceſſive *General Aſſemblies* of the kirk.—In the year 1581 they were ſolemnly *engroſſed* in the records of Aſſembly, for *preſervation*, and as the principal ſtandards of the national church. ——Betwixt the years 1580, and 1590, they were further *ſworn* to, frequently, by perſons of all ranks, in the *national covenant*.——And, laſtly, in the year 1592, it is no leſs certain, that they were finally ratified, along with the whole order of *preſbyterian church government*, by the famous act of Parliament paſs'd in that year, *eſtabliſhing* preſbytery in this land; upon which bottom the *revolution* ſettlement, when *preſbytery* was reſtored to this country in

1690, was alſo expreſsly founded, together with all the *liberties* and *privileges* of the kirk, as then poſſeſſed by law.

Q. You preſent a ſtrange ſcene, indeed, of confuſion and anarchy!——the whole nation, as well *clergy* as *layety* in a ſtate of inſurrection againſt their rightful hereditary ſovereign, the *Patron*!——diſputing his authority!——arraigning his juriſdiction!——nay, flying into open rebellion againſt the fundamental *law* of his *kingdom*!—Pray, how did the *Patrons* ſupport themſelves in this ſo dangerous and alarming *criſis* of their *government*?

A. The Patrons being juſtly fretted and provoked at the above violent meaſures of our *forefathers*, in preſuming to call their ſovereign right of *patronage* into queſtion, and to diſpute that *prerogative*, which had been confirmed to them by the *edicts* and *bulls* of ſo many famous *Popes* and *councils*, made the moſt vigorous efforts, ſtretching every nerve, in order to reſtrain this vitious impetuoſity of the nation, from flying off into a final courſe of tranſgreſſion and apoſtacy. By which means, they made a ſhift to keep their countenance, in the midſt of this almoſt *general* defection; and to preſerve their power and authority in ſo far as to obtain a confirmation of their ſovereign right to nominate and preſent a *qualified perſon* to every vacant congregation; but, at the ſame time, ſuch was the root, which the ſeeds of rebellion againſt their *ſovereignty* had taken; ſuch the unlucky biaſs, which had infected the

whole *body corporate* of the *people*, toward the *forbidden fruit* of *liberty*: that though the power of preſenting a *qualified perſon* was confirmed to them, yet the power of *calling* and *judging* ſuch qualified perſon, and of *finally* determining concerning his *qualifications* and *ſettlement*, was forciblywreſted from them, and lodged, the firſt, in the hands of the *people*, and the laſt, in the judicatories of the kirk, particularly the *General Aſſembly*, as, in the laſt reſort, the *ſpiritual tutors*, and *curators* of the *people*.

Q. You tell us indeed ſtrange things.—But pray, where is the law, by which ſuch a deadly thruſt was given to the *peerleſs* majeſty of *Patrons*?

A. This is to be found in a ſucceſſive chain of repeated acts of Parliament following and confirming one another, from the year 1567 till 1592, when, thro' the determined perſeverance of our *forefathers*, *preſbytery*, and all the *laws* reſpecting it, received their final ſanction and confirmation. The words of the *original act* 1567, may ſerve for an example ſufficiently expreſſive of the *biaſs* our *forefathers* entertained towards this *mortal ſin* againſt the *Patrons*, as well as of the great influence which they had in the direction of public affairs at *that* period; and as they ſhew to what length miſguided zeal can go, ſo they have certainly fixed a thorn in the ſide of the *Patrons*, which has ever ſince baffled their power and addreſs cleverly to pull out. The

words are, (King James VI. 1 Parl. Act. 7. entitled, "Of admiſſion of miniſters; of "laic patronages"—) "Providing, that in caſe "the Patron preſent a perſon *qualified to his* "*underſtanding*, and failing of one another "within the ſaid ſix months, and the ſaid ſu- "perintendant or commiſſioner of the kirk "*refuſes* to *receive* and *admit* the perſon pre- "ſented by the Patron, as ſaid is; it ſhall be "*lawful* to the Patron to appeal to the ſuper- "intendant and miniſters of that province, "where the benefice lies, and *deſire* the per- "ſon preſented to be *admitted*; which if they "*refuſe*, to *appeal* to the General Aſſembly "of this whole realm, by whom the cauſe "being *decided*, ſhall take end, as they *de-* "*cern* and *declare*."

Q. This law indeed ſtrongly ſhows to what height miſguided zeal can go, as well as the great power and influence our *anceſtors* had, when they could thus preſume to circumſcribe the *ſovereign plenitude* of the Patron's power, rendering it *amenable* at the bar, and ſubject to the *cognizance* of a petty kirk court!—But, pray, was not this moſt impudent reſtriction of the *Patron's royal prerogative*, afterwards repealed?

A. In point of *law*, it is not repealed, even to this day. But in point of fact, it has been (to the immortal honour of our *modern clergy*) repealed for many years paſt.

Q. How ſo?

A. That is to ſay; The Patrons, with all

their power and influence, have at no time been able, hitherto, to obtain from a *Britiſh Parliament* a *reverſal* of the *above law*; which therefore remains at preſent in force, completely as full and legal, as in the year 1567, when newly enacted. And the *church*, of conſequence, is ſtill as *legally* and *conſtitutionally* poſſeſſed of a *power* to reject *every* preſentation, in all *caſes*, wherever they ſhall ſee cauſe to *decern* and *declare* the perſon preſented by the Patron to be *not qualified*.——But then, though the Patrons have not been able to influence the blunt obſtinacy of a *Britiſh Parliament*, they have ſucceeded greatly better in dealing with the more *mild* and *flexible ſpirit* of our modern *General Aſſemblies*. Theſe *ſons* of *peace*, for many years paſt, have uniformly ſettled all pariſhes promiſcuouſly at the *nod* of the *Patron*, without aſking queſtions; and have voluntarily and totally renounced, of their own free will and accord, with a *moderation* truly becoming clergymen of a polite, liberal, and *courtly* education, that *power* of *inquiring* into, and *judging* of the *qualifications* of the Patron's Preſentee, which the wrong headed zeal of our forefathers had lodged in their hands, as a *bit* in the mouths of Patrons, and which a *Britiſh Parliament* has never thought proper to take away.

Q. What! do you indeed ſay that the church courts, particularly the General Aſſembly, are at this very day, *if they pleaſe*, poſſeſſed, by virtue of the *above law*, of the power of *reject-*

*ing* any *Preſentee* offered by a Patron, if they ſhall *find* and *declare* him *unqualified* for the charge?

A. Moſt undoubtedly they are.——And the Patron, by the law as it at preſent ſtands, has no recourſe left in that caſe; but his cauſe muſt neceſſarily *take end* as they *decern* and *declare*. ——And this is the circumſtance which I ſaid tends ſo hugely to enhance the merit of our *modern clergymen*, with the Patrons, beyond all their *predeceſſors!*—Their predeceſſors were a ſurly uncourtly generation, who diſputed every inch, at the hazard often of their lives and fortunes, with the Patrons; and who, Moſes-like, would not yield a *ſingle hoof* to Pharaoh, of all that the Lord required to be ſerved with. ——But they, on the contrary!—their ſilken ſons!—unawed by any force!—unconſtrained by any law!—have made the Patrons not only a free and voluntary ſurrender of their whole flocks and pariſhes, (for theſe, indeed, are but the ſmaller matters of the *law* with *modern prieſts*), but even of their whole privileges, and *power* itſelf!—which is the very laſt thing, (excepting his *tithes*) that a *modern clergyman* will ordinarily be found willing to part with.

Q. You have given a *truly* ſurprizing hiſtory of the rapid progreſs of our forefathers, firſt ſin againſt the Patron, iſſuing in the above act of Parliament 1592.—Pray what account give you of this matter after the above period?

A. After the above-mentioned period, till the year 1612, our forefathers enjoyed a com-

plete triumph in their *apoſtacy*; the Patrons were brought under a total *eclipſe*, and all ſettlements were uniformly carried on with the entire *good-will*, *liking*, and *approbation* of the *people*.——But in the year 1612, the Patrons obtained a complete triumph in their turn, while our forefathers underwent the moſt diſtreſſing reverſe of fortune.——King James the VI. being now ſecurely ſeated on the Engliſh throne, and his natural propenſity to ſupport the declining cauſe of the *Patrons* being further inflamed by the example he ſaw of the unlimited ſway of patronage in the Engliſh church, he, this year, made our rebellious anceſtors to feel the full weight of his diſpleaſure to the uttermoſt; even of his wrath, like the *roaring* of a *lion*. They had fretted and chaffed him many a day with their obſtinacy and perverſity, during their late ſtruggles for preſbytery, when he could not help it; and now, when he had it in his power, he was reſolved to take his full revenge. He, therefore, deprived them at once of all their privileges—their *General Aſſemblies*, theſe nurſeries of treaſon and rebellion againſt the omnipotent Patron, were aboliſhed—*preſbytery* itſelf, the natural and irreconcileable enemy of *patronage*, was annihilated—and *prelacy*, bleſſed *prelacy!*—with her two eldeſt ſons, the *Patron* and the *Biſhop*, were declared to be the only *government*, and only *governors* of the church of Scotland.

Q. How long did matters continue in this hopeful way with the *Patrons?*

A. It continued thus with the Patrons, from the 1612 to the 1638, during which period *prelacy*, and *prelatic principles* prevailed, and the Patrons, therefore, ſhone forth in all their zenith of glory. But no ſooner did *preſbyterian* principles begin to revive in that Aſſembly which met at Glaſgow in the 1638, but at the ſame time the old ſtandard againſt patronage began again to rear up its head. It is well known with what zeal the *court* and *epiſcopalian party* oppoſed the meeting and continuance of that remarkable Aſſembly, from a ſuſpicion that the old leaven was beginning afreſh to ferment, and the nation, in general, on the wing of returning back again to that ſame ſpirit of *liberty* and *independence*, that in their forefathers days had been ſo obnoxious to the *court* and the *Patrons*, in the obſtinate and unconquerable oppoſition they had given, whether to *popery*, *prelacy*, *patronage*, or *arbitrary power*. But all their endeavours were by this time, of no effect. The early and perverted principles of *liberty*, civil as well as eccleſiaſtic in the land, which had now of a long while been uninterruptedly tranſmitted by *ordinary generation*, from father to ſon, (like water for a time pent up by ſuperior force in a narrow place), were now no longer to be reſtrained; but burſt forth in this Aſſembly like a deluge, carrying all before

them, *prelacy*, *patronage*, and *tyranny*, in one promiſcuous and mingled ruin!

Q. Did the acts and reſolutions of this Aſſembly 1638, ever receive the general concurrence of the nation, or ſanction of the legiſlature?

A. The effects of the intemperate heats contracted by the body of the nation, ſubſequent to this Aſſembly, it is well known were ſuch, that they ſoon after broke forth into open war; the noiſe and confuſion of which, for ſome time, ſuperceded all other counſels. But at length, after Charles the I. his death, in 1649, it cannot be denied that the acts and reſolutions of this General Aſſembly 1638, were effectually adopted by the whole nation, and made the ground-work of that famous act of Parliament, enacted by the eſtates of the kingdom, met at Edinburgh in that year, wherein after aſſerting and recapitulating all their liberties and privileges as a free nation and kingdom, they, in expreſs words, *aboliſhed* altogether the power and juriſdiction of *patronage*, together with all exerciſe of the *right* of *preſentation within this realm*, and in lieu thereof, ſubſtituted in all time coming, *the call of the congregation*, with the *trial* and *admiſſion* of the *preſbytery*.

Q. Did this act of the eſtates of Scotland, aboliſhing patronage in the 1649, ever receive the royal ſanction?

A. It received the royal ſanction before his majeſty left *Breda*, along with the other acts

of this *convention* of the *eſtates*, as well as frequently after the *king*'s arrival in Scotland.

Q. Did our *forefathers*, then, obtain a final victory over the *Patrons*, having thus obtained the entire *overthrow* and *abolition* of their power, by this act of Parliament?

A. No; this advantage over the *Patrons* was but ſhort-liv'd; for ſoon after this, *viz.* in the 1660, *Charles* the II. being reſtored without conditions to the throne of England, he took that opportunity to glut his revenge upon his *old friends* in Scotland; and therefore once more buried *preſbytery*, as his grandfather had done before him, in its own ruins, reſtored prelacy, and made patronage emerge to all its former glory and ſovereignty of juriſdiction.

Q. Pray, how came it to paſs that *Charles* the II. who in the years 1649, and 1650, had ſo publicly and ſolemnly *confirmed preſbytery*, *aboliſhed patronage*, and bound himſelf by numberleſs oaths and covenants to our forefathers to the above effect, ſhould now in 1660, but 10 years later, as publicly and as ſolemnly aboliſh *preſbytery*, confirm *prelacy*, and reſtore *patronage*?

A. Our forefathers, being no better than *heretics*, (and that of the worſt kind; namely, heretics againſt the fundamental doctrine of implicit obedience to the ſovereign law of patronage), were not entitled to have any faith kept with them. And *Charles* the II. having no more objection to *popery* than his brother

the *duke* of *York*, (though not ſo zealous for it, becauſe he equally laughed at all religions) found, therefore, no difficulty in breaking through all his *engagements* with them on that account.

Q. How fared it with the *oppoſers* of *patronage* at this remarkable period of the *reſtoration*?

A. Our forefathers having eaten ſo largely of the *ſour grape* of rebellion againſt the *Patrons* in times paſt, were now, at *Charles'* reſtoration, made to feel the *bitter fruits* of their ſin and apoſtacy, being forced without mercy into the fields, and mountains, and wilderderneſſes, becauſe they would not give becoming ſubmiſſion to the legal inſtitution (which they perverſely called intruſion) of the *biſhops* and their *curates*, who now alone poſſeſſed the favour as well as *benefices* of the *Patrons*.

Q. How long did our *forefathers* continue in this outcaſt eſtate under *Charles* the II.?

A. Our *forefathers* remained in this outcaſt eſtate, on account of their unconquerable oppoſition both to *prelacy* and *patronage*, from the year 1660, at which time Charles was reſtored, till the year 1688, when the glorious *K. William* arrived, the Great Deliverer of theſe lands at the *revolution*.

Q. How fared it with our *forefathers* at this ever memorable period?

A. The *revolution*, though it cannot be denied, upon the whole, that it was the moſt glorious *æra* of *liberty* which theſe lands ever

enjoyed; yet it was undoubtedly the moſt unfavourable to *patronage* and *Patrons*, of any ſince the *reformation*. For no ſooner had K. *William*, ſupported by our brave and pious revolution *patriots*, finally rooted *popery*, *prelacy*, and *arbitrary power* out of this land, but inſtantly the old rebellious ſtandard of our *forefathers* againſt *patronage*, began to rear up its head afreſh, as it always had done before, with the very firſt dawnings of *liberty*: and our *rough* and obſtinate *anceſtors* failed not to dun the royal ear with *petitions*, *repreſentations*, and *claims* of *right*, till they obtained an act *totally aboliſhing patronage*, as well as *prelacy*, in this land, and veſting the ſole power of ſettling every pariſh in the *heritors*, and *elders*, and *presbytery* of the bounds, with the *conſent* and *concurrence* of the *congregation*.

Q. Can you repeat that famous act?

A. The act begins thus; "Act concerning "Patronages, July 19th, 1690.—Our ſove-"reign Lord and Lady, the King and Queen's "Majeſty, conſidering that the power of pre-"ſenting miniſters to vacant churches, of late "exerciſed by Patrons, hath been *greatly* "*abuſed*, and is inconvenient to be continued "in this realm, do therefore, with the advice "and conſent of the eſtates of Parliament, "hereby diſcharge, caſs, annul, and make "void the foreſaid power heretofore exerciſed "by any Patron of preſenting miniſters to a-"ny kirk now vacant, or that ſhall hereafter "vaicke within this kingdom, with all exercile

" of the ſaid power; and alſo all gifts and in-
" feſtments, acts, ſtatutes, and cuſtoms, in
" ſo far as they may be extended or under-
" ſtood to eſtabliſh the ſaid right of preſenta-
" tion.——And to the effect, the calling and
" entring miniſters, in all time coming, may
" be orderly and regularly performed, their
" Majeſties, with the conſent of the eſtates of
" Parliament, do ſtatute and declare, That,
" in caſe of the vacancy of any particular
" church, and for ſupplying the ſame with
" a miniſter, the *heritors* of the ſaid pariſh
" being Proteſtants, and the *elders*, are to
" name and propoſe the perſon to the *whole*
" *congregation*, to be either *approven* or *diſ-*
" *approven* by them; and if they diſapprove,
" the diſapprovers give in their reaſons, to the
" effect, the affair may be cognoſced upon
" by the *presbytery* of the bounds, at whoſe
" judgment, and by whoſe determination the
" calling and entring of a particular miniſter,
" is to be ordered and concluded," *&c.*

Q. Did our forefathers long enjoy this very remarkable victory over the power of the Patrons at the revolution?

A. No: Their gold ſoon again became dim; and the *Patrons* who, through their means, got ſo humiliating a blow from K. *William*, had their full revenge, in being as completely reſtored, by Q. *Ann*, not many years after, to all their ancient ſtate of lordly dominion, and of having their inſolent *oppoſers*

reduced to their former *bondage* and *ſlavery* under them.

Q. Pray, how happened, again, this ſurpriſing change in favours of the Patrons?

A. This change, ſo favourable to the *Patrons*, did not happen till after the death of K. *William*, and during the reign of a St——t, and by the Jacobite cabals of a Tory miniſtry, in direct contradiction to, as well as contempt of, both the revolution ſettlement, and treaty of union.——The revolution is well known to have entirely turned upon the old perverted principles of their *forefathers* reſpecting the *forbidden fruit* of *liberty*, whether civil or eccleſiaſtic.—And by the treaty of *union*, all the privileges of the Church of Scotland favourable to this *liberty*, had been ſecured, ſo that no Britiſh Parliament for ever had power to alter or innovate any part thereof.—And of theſe *privileges*, the friends of *preſbytery* eſteemed their freedom, by the act 1690, from *patronage* to be none of the leaſt.——But all this notwithſtanding, the *Patrons* were glorioufly reinſtated in their former dominion, by the famous act 10*mo annæ*, *anno* 1712, being ſcarce five years complete after the *union* had taken place, which was in the year 1707; and that by one bold effort of the Tory intrigues, which at that time prevailed in the cabinet for reſtoring K. *James*, and with him, probably, both *prelacy* and *popery* to Britain.

Q. What connexion had the reſtoring of

*patronage* by this act in the 10th of Queen Ann, with the reſtoring the *Pretender?*

A. A moſt direct and immediate connexion. The reſtoring of *patronage* at this time, was meant as a previous ſtep towards humbling the *ſpirit* and *power* of the Church of Scotland, who, it was well known, would have been the moſt violent oppoſers of the *Pretender*, in caſe of any attempt to bring him back again to Britain. The Church of Scotland had ſuffered ſo much from what they ſcrupled not to call the *unkingly perfidy* of *Charles* the II. as well as the bloody bigotry of his brother the duke of *York*, during the long period of her ſufferings, betwixt the *reſtoration* and *revolution*, that nothing at all could be expected from her in the way of friendſhip to that family: And therefore it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould be brought down; that ſeeing ſhe was not diſpoſed to forward the return of the *Pretender*, it ſhould be out of her power to obſtruct it. The Church of Scotland, the fountain of all *whiggery* muſt therefore fall the firſt *ſacrifice* to the meaſures of a *Tory miniſtry*; and the firſt ſtep to her downfal muſt be, to wreath the *old yoke* of *patronage* once more about her neck.

Q. If ſuch was the intention of reſtoring *patronage* at this time in Scotland, how came it to paſs that *prelacy* and the *Pretender* did not alſo follow of courſe?

A. This came to paſs only through the unexpected death of Queen *Ann*, which happen-

ed ſcarce two years after this, and diſconcerted all the ſchemes of the *Tories* and *Jacobites*, before they were ripe for execution; by making way for the immediate ſucceſſion of the Proteſtant line, in the preſent illuſtrious *family* of *Hanover*, (of which the unſucceſsful attempt in the 1715 is a clear proof). But had a few years more been added to the Queen's life, it is more than probable, we ſhould have ſeen *prelacy*, if not the *Pretender* alſo, reſtored along with *patronage*, in Scotland, and *preſbytery* once more buried, as at the *reſtoration* of *Charles* the II.?

Q. Theſe conjectures appear not improbable from the circumſtances of the times.—But, pray, how has it fared with the *oppoſers* of *patronage* ſince the above act reſtoring it, in the 1712?

A. The ſticklers for the pretended *liberties* of the *Chriſtian people* againſt the ſovereign rights of the *Patrons*, on that occaſion, made ſome attempts, indeed, in ſupport of the *old principles*; but as theſe proved unſucceſsful, it has been obſerved that the ſpirit of *oppoſition* has been on the moſt viſible decline ever ſince. ——The wrong-headed whims of our fooliſh *forefathers* in this matter are now generally exploded, and laughed out of countenance.—Our *modern clergy*, in particular, ſeem to vie with each other, who ſhall pay the moſt humble and ſubmiſſive adoration at the ſhrines of the *Patrons*.—So long as they are in the eſtate

of *probationers* and *canditates* for the miniſtry, they keep at the moſt ſovereign contemptuous diſtance from the *common people*, and look upon themſelves ſingly in the light of *probationers* upon *trials* for the good graces and approbation of ſome *Patron*, who may help them to a *benefice*; *i. e.* to a *ſtipend*, *manſe*, and *glebe*. ——And whenever they find themſelves, by the good will of the *Patrons*, made members of a *kirk court*, their only ſtudy henceforth is to approve themſelves grateful to them, by an unlimited and unreſerved concurrence with all their *preſentations*; in no caſe diſputing their authority, or calling their ſovereign *imprimatur* into queſtion.—No matter what the concurrence of the *people* or *pariſh* is, with the *Preſentee*: the ſmaller the people's concurrence, the greater is a modern clergyman's merit with the Patron.——No matter what any hot-headed *bigot* is fooliſh enough to mention of the *antiquated doctrines* of the laws of the church, of the rules of edification, of the liberties of the people, or, of their right to elect, or to call, or to be ſatisfied with the *miniſter* to be *placed* among them.——All theſe *circumſtances* are ſure to meet with nothing but contempt, and the *abettors* of them, with nothing but diſappointment in our preſent *General Aſſemblies*.——Such are the preſent *halcyon* days of *patronage*!—Let all her friends ſing, Jo TRIUMPHE!

Q. You ſaid that ſome attempts were made about the time of Queen *Ann*'s act reſtoring

*patronage* in the year 1712. Pray, what were theſe?

A. The Commiſſion of the *General Aſſembly* 1711, when that *bill* was under conſideration, made a bold and forward ſtand againſt it; being in the heat of their blind, and untempered zeal hurried on to carry their imaginary grievance, with all the *confidence* of a *Lord Mayor* of *London*, ſupported by the *livery*, in a hot-brained *remonſtrance*, to the very foot of the throne.—But they met with all the ſucceſs they deſerved for preſuming to trouble Majeſty with ſuch *bagatelles*.

Q. Pray what was the tenor of this ſame *remonſtrance* of the church upon that occaſion?

A. As the commiſſion's *addreſs*, in this affair, is, perhaps, one of the moſt full and complete ſpecimens of the ſtrange perverted humour and biaſs that has uniformly infected the people of this country through all their generations, againſt the ſovereign influence of *patronage*; and as it appears to have been the laſt ſtruggle of a dying cauſe (to the honour of our *modern clergy*, and preſent *General Aſſemblies*, be this ſpoken)! I ſhall repeat it to you, word for word, as it was by the members of that *commiſſion* drawn up, and ſent to her Majeſty Queen *Ann*, and afterwards ſuſtained, approved, and adopted by the *Aſſembly* 1712.—And as I make no doubt but this *Catechiſm* will paſs under the review of the members of the *preſent Aſſemby* 1771, ſo I ſhall have the ſatiſ-

faction to think that many of the ſons, grandſons, and ſucceſſors of the members of *that commiſſion* 1711, and *Aſſembly* 1712, will have hereby the pleaſing opportunity of *congratulating* themſelves on their being ſo completely *emancipated*, through the happy turn of *modern* education, from the *errors* and *ignorance* of their blindfolded *forefathers*.

" Act approving of the repreſentation, and " addreſs made by the Commiſſion of the " laſt General Aſſembly to the Queen, " concerning Patronages.

*Edinburgh, May* 13*th*, 1712, Seſſion 11.

" The General Aſſembly having conſidered " the proceedings of the commiſſion of the " late General Aſſembly, with relation to " public affairs, and in particular, having had " produced and read before them, the repre- " ſentations made by them to her Majeſty, " concerning the bill, entituled, *a bill for re-* " *ſtoring patronages*; the General Aſſem- " bly did by their vote, and hereby *do* unani- " mouſly *approve* and *ratify* the foreſaid " proceedings of the ſaid commiſſion in the " premiſſes, and particularly the ſaid repreſen- " tation, as having been moſt *faithful* and " *ſeaſonable*. And in token of their ſaid *ap-* " *probation*, they hereby *ordain* the ſaid re- " preſentation to be here inſerted *verbatim*, as " follows:

" *To the Queen's moſt excellent Majeſty.*

" The moſt humble repreſentation and petiti-
" of the Commiſſion of the late General
" Aſſembly of the Church of Scotland.

" Though we cannot forbear to regret the
" want of ſucceſs in our endeavours, with re-
" lation to a bill, lately paſt into an act, enti-
" tuled, *An act for preventing the diſturbing*
" *of thoſe of the epiſcopal communion in Scot-*
" *land in the exerciſe of their religious wor-*
" *ſhip, and in the uſe of the liturgy of the*
" *Church of England;* yet, ſeeing we muſt
" ſtill judge that the form and purity of wor-
" ſhip preſently within this church, and its
" preſbyterian government and diſcipline, e-
" ſtabliſhed by the acts of Parliament, purſu-
" ant to the claim of right, are to remain
" and continue unalterable, and that the acts
" of Parliament ſecuring our church-govern-
" ment, and the eſtabliſhment thereof, are to
" be held and obſerved in all time coming, as
" a fundamental and eſſential condition of
" the *treaty* of *union*, concluded *betwixt*
" the two kingdoms, without any alteration
" thereof, or *derogation* thereto, in any ſort
" for ever.

" We cannot but with all humble duty and
" ſubmiſſion take notice of another bill pre-
" ſented in the Parliament of Great Britain
" for *reſtoring of patronages*. Which we con-
" ceive is contrary to our church-conſtituti-
" on, ſo well ſecured by the treaty of union,

" and ſolemnly ratified by the acts of Parlia-
" ment of both kingdoms, and will inevita-
" bly obſtruct the work of the goſpel, and
" create great diſorder and diſquiet in this
" church and nation *.—— For the further
" clearing whereof, we beg leave to repreſent
" to your Majeſty, That from our firſt refor-
" mation from popery, patronages have been
" reckoned a yoke and burden upon the
" Church of Scotland, as is declared by the
" firſt and ſecond books of diſcipline, pub-
" liſhed ſoon after the ſaid reformation. Since
" which time they were ſtill judged a griev-
" ance, till at length they came to be by law
" aboliſhed.

" Theſe patronages having been reſtored
" with prelacy in the year 1661, and 1662,
" did indeed continue till the year 1690, that
" prelacy was aboliſhed, and preſbyterian go-
" vernment again eſtabliſhed: and though
" the act of Parliament 1690, reſettling pref-
" byterian church-government, was founded
" upon the act of Parliament 1592, which
" bears a relation to patronages, yet the
" ſaid act of Parliament 1690, doth ex-
" preſsly except that part of the old act,
" and refer patronages to be afterwards
" conſidered, which accordingly followed
" in the ſame Parliament 1690. Where-
" by your Majeſty may plainly perceive that

* *Query*, Was this *commiſſion* poſſeſſed of the gift of *prophecy*?

" the abolition of patronages was made a part
" of our church-conſtitution, enacted by the
" act 1690; and that this act 1690, with all o-
" ther acts relative thereto, being expreſsly
" ratified, and for ever confirmed by the act
" ſecuring the Proteſtant religion, and preſ-
" byterian church-government, and engroſſed
" as an eſſential condition of the ratification
" of the *treaty* of *union* found in the Parlia-
" ments of both kingdoms, the ſaid *act abo-*
" *liſhing patronages* muſt be underſtood to be
" a part of our preſbyterian conſtitution, ſe-
" cured to us by the *treaty* of *union* for ever.

" Yet the ſame Parliament 1690, was ſo
" tender of the civil rights of Patrons, and
" ſo ſincerely deſirous only to reſtore the
" church to its juſt and primitive liberty, in
" calling miniſters, in a way agreeable to the
" word of God, that they only diſcharged the
" Patron's power of preſenting miniſters to
" churches vacant; but as to any thing of
" civil rights, did better the condition of Pa-
" trons, not only by reſerving to them the
" right of diſpoſal of vacant ſtipends, for
" pious uſes within the pariſh, but alſo giv-
" ing them the heretable right of the tithes;
" reſtricting the miniſters who formerly had
" the ſaid right to ſtipends much below the
" value of the ſaid tithes.

" This being then the true account of our
" legal ſettlement, as to this matter, We
" preſume alſo, in all humble duty, to repre-
" ſent to your Majeſty, That the reſtitution of

" patronages, as to the point of preſentation,
" can only gratify a few, while, on the other
" hand, it muſt neceſſarily diſoblige a far
" greater part of your Majeſty's good ſub-
" jects, that are now freed of that impoſition.

" Neither can we forbear to ſuggeſt to your
" Majeſty, That from what is ſaid, it may
" eaſily be gathered what difficulties and hard-
" ſhips preſbyteries may be laid under, as to
" their compliance with this innovation, and
" what *differences*, *conteſts*, and *diſorders*
" may *probably* enſue betwixt *Patrons*, *preſ-*
" *byteries*, *heritors*, and *people*, beſide the
" known *abuſes* wherewith *patronages* have
" been attended, even in their moſt ſettled
" condition, whereof many inſtances might
" be given, eſpecially that thereby a founda-
" tion was laid for ſimoniacal pactions betwixt
" Patrons, and thoſe preſented by them; and
" likewiſe miniſters were impoſed upon pa-
" riſhes, by Patrons, who were utterly ſtran-
" gers to their circumſtances, having neither
" property nor reſidence therein.

" And therefore we cannot but moſt hum-
" bly and earneſtly obteſt your Majeſty, to
" conſider this affair of *reſtoring patronages* in
" this church, with all its circumſtances and
" conſequences; and ſince, through the bleſ-
" ſing of God, and your Majeſty's gracious
" protection, we have hitherto been at quiet and
" eaſe in this matter, That your Majeſty would
" be graciouſly pleaſed, in your great wiſdom,
" to uſe proper means for preventing this en-

" croachment, ſo evidently prejudicial to the " work of the goſpel, and the peace of the " church.

" That your Majeſty may be guided and " directed of God, in the great and weighty " affairs of your government, and that after " the fulneſs of earthly bleſſings here, you " may for ever wear a crown of glory that fa- " deth not away, are the earneſt and fervent " prayers of, *&c.*

" Signed, *&c.*

" WILLIAM MITCHEL, Moderator."

Q. Into what eſtate does this evil, and apparently irreclaimable inclination, ſo peculiar to this country, both of old and of late, of oppoſing the law of patronage, bring mankind?

A. This evil inclination, ſo peculiar to this country in all ages, from father to ſon, brings them all into an eſtate of unpardonable ſin with all Patrons, and modern church-men; as well as of every miſery, which the preſent courts, whether civil, or eccleſiaſtic, can deviſe or inflict.

Q. Wherein conſiſts the ſinfulneſs of that eſtate whereinto men fell by tranſgreſſing the law of patronage, which we conceive is contrary to our church-conſtitution, *&c.*

A. As to the ſinfulneſs of the eſtate into which tranſgreſſion of the law of patronage brings mankind, like as in many other knotty queſtions, doctors are found to differ.—The

friends of patronage do not ſcruple roundly to pronounce, that the tranſgreſſion of the law of patronage implies in it infinitely more than the guilt of Adam's firſt ſin.—For Adam's firſt ſin, they ſay, was only a ſimple tranſgreſſion of the law of God, written without witneſſes, in the heart of Adam, and publiſhed only, as it were, in a private manner, without formality, in the garden of Eden.—But the ſin againſt the Patron is a tranſgreſſion againſt the laws of the land, written in ſeveral records of Parliament, and for the greater notoriety, publiſhed every year in thunder, both from the bar, and from the ſides of the throne, in our General Aſſemblies. — The guilt of Adam's firſt ſin, they will tell you, is now well known (according to the learned Dr. Taylor of Norwich) to deprive no man of his original righteouſneſs; but if a man is once tainted with the ſin againſt patronage, he from that moment loſes all original righteouſneſs, and goodneſs of heart, becomes corrupted in his whole nature, and a poiſoned fountain of all actual tranſgreſſions.

Q. What is the miſery of that eſtate whereinto men fall by tranſgreſſing the law of patronage?

A. Manifold, ſore, and accumulated are the miſeries, unto which, it is agreed on all hands, this eſtate is expoſed.——In the firſt place, the tranſgreſſors, whether clergy or laiety, loſe all intereſt, favour, or communion whatever with the Patrons, and fall under their

heavieſt wrath and indignation, which they will aſſuredly be made feel to the end of their lives, by every habile method in their power. In the ſecond place, they loſe all communion with our preſent church-judicatories.—A man may be a drunkard, ſwearer, Sabbath breaker, Arian, Arminian, Socinian, and yet be allowed free communion with the church, while there is none that dare make him afraid; but if a man is infected with the more monſtrous *leproſy* of oppoſing *patronage*, his very breath becomes *contagious*, and a clergy-man of true *moderation* cannot henceforth live with him ſo much as under the ſame *roof*. In the *third* place, ſuch *delinquents* are ſet adrift, like *ſheep* without a *ſhepherd*, to *wander through the mountains, and upon every high hill; to become a prey, and meat to every beaſt of the field, becauſe there is no ſhepherd; neither do* the *ſhepherds* any more mind them, to *ſearch for them*, but the *ſhepherds feed themſelves. They eat the fat, they clothe them with the wool*, they *kill them that are fed*, but *the diſeaſed* they ſeek not *to ſtrengthen, neither* to *heal that which* is *ſick, neither* to *bind up that which* is *broken, neither to bring again that which* is *driven away, neither to ſeek that wkich* is *loſt; but with force and with cruelty they rule them:* (Ezek. xxxiv. 1,—10. — In the *fourth* place; not only are they thus driven out to the *wilderneſs* to *periſh*, but a moſt dreadful *hue* and *cry* is ſent after them: they are loaded with all the curſes of a popiſh *excommunication*,

denied the uſe of *fire* and *water*, repreſented in the moſt hideous light, as men alienated from all *regular* government, *turbulent* and *ſeditious*, enemies to *Cæſar* and the *ſtate*, and who, with the apoſtle *Paul* and *Silas*, would no leſs than *turn* the *world up-ſide-down*, was their power equal to their inclination.—In the *laſt* place, to crown their *miſery*, they are withal left to *provide a ſhepherd* for themſelves, who muſt be *paid*, not out of the *fat benefices* of the *Patrons*, (theſe are all beſtowed on his own *minions*), but out of their own *pockets*.

Q. What! Do the preſent *oppoſers* of *patronage* carry the matter ſo far as to *maintain* their *miniſters* out of their own *pockets*, provided they can have them of their own *free choice*, and *election*, rather than to accept of the *free complement* of them from the *Patrons*?

A. Moſt certainly it is ſo.—And this indeed is what confounds our *modern clergy* beyond all *meaſure*, who are accuſtomed to *meaſure* every thing only by *money*. For they ſee whole *churches* built, and *ſtipends* raiſed, to accommodate a large *congregation*, and ſecure a liberal maintenance to a *miniſter* among theſe *poor out-caſts*, and that with greater eaſe, and apparent *alacrity*, than they themſelves, with all their intereſts with the *Patrons*, can perhaps get a few broken ſlates patched on the ſhattered roof of one of their own *churches* or *manſes*; or, perhaps, a miſerable augmentation of a few *pennies Scots* added to their *vicarage*

*tithes*, after a tedious depending *proceſs* of many ſeſſions.—For it is to be obſerved, that a *clergyman* may be *learned* (as *learning* now a-days goes) to a miracle; he may be in the higheſt reputation with the *Patron*; he may be a perfect *zealot* for the hereditary indefeaſible rights of *patronage*; and yet was he to draw his *ſtipend* from the *mere good-will* of the *Patron*, or the *voluntary ſubſcription* of his *ordinary hearers*, it is to be doubted, that it would ſoon cool his zeal for *Patrons* and *patronage*; and make him a ſpeedy convert to the rights of the *Chriſtian people*.

Q. How do you account for this egregious folly in men, to plunge themſelves into ſuch a complication of *ſin* and *miſery*, by ſo wrong-headed and obſtinate an oppoſition to ſo ſalutary an appointment as the *law* of *patronage*?

A. As every man is naturally diſpoſed to think well of his own way, ſo our *fore-fathers* and their *fooliſh* ſucceſſors have not failed to muſter up a number of *ſpecious* arguments, to ſatisfy themſelves in this matter.—When Eve was determined to eat of the *forbidden fruit*, we find that even ſhe did not want *ſpecious* arguments for her offence; *ſhe ſaw*, ſays the text, *that the tree was good for food,—and that it was pleaſant to the eyes,—and a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe*.—Juſt in like manner did our *fore-fathers* argue: They *ſaw*, or imagined they *ſaw*, that the *free choice* of their own *paſtors was good* for their *ſpiritual food*:

—They *ſaw*, or imagined they *ſaw*, That without this, they could neither *hear* them without *prejudice*, nor *truſt* them without *reſerve*. — That, therefore, without this they could be of no uſe to *make* them *wiſe* by their *inſtructions*, far leſs could they obtain that *place* in their *hearts*, (without which a miniſter can never be *juſtly* ſaid to be *placed* in a *pariſh*, however he may have acquired a *worldly title* to a *houſe* and *livelihood* within it), which the very intimate and endearing relation betwixt *paſtor* and *people* neceſſarily demands.——Liberty, they ſaid further, like *light*, was *pleaſant to the eyes*, eſpecially reſpecting their beſt and moſt valuable *intereſts*, the concerns of their *ſouls*: and they would look upon it to be no better than a mere mockery, to be told that the *Pope*'s power was tyrannical, antichriſtian, and not to be tolerated in this land of *liberty*, and yet at the ſame time to be kept under equal ſpiritual *bondage* and *ſlavery* to the *Patrons*.— They further argued, that the deſign of *public eſtabliſhments* in religion, could not be the good of a *few individuals*, to make proviſion, and erect a number of fat benefices for a ſet of lazy, indolent, uſeleſs *clergy*; who neither cared for the *people*, nor the *people* for them, but paid their whole attention to a few *Patrons*, becauſe from them they looked for their whole reward.—But the great deſign of *public eſtabliſhments* behoved to be the good of the *public*, and the inſtruction and edification of the *people*.—That when *eſtabliſhments* of re-

ligion were made to anſwer this great end, they were great bleſſings, and truly *deſirable*: but when they failed of this, and were uſed for no higher purpoſe, but as a temporal *engine*, to gratify the *pride*, or ſerve the *politics* of *Patrons*; or to ſatisfy the *worldlineſs* of a ſelfiſh, carnal, and temporizing *clergy*, they were the greateſt curſe that could come upon a land.

Q. Have theſe *wild principles* any conſiderable number of *abettors* now in this country?

A. If we were to judge by the public *deciſions* of our *General Aſſemblies* for 30 or 40 years back, we ſhould certainly conclude that theſe *wild principles* had not one friend or *abettor* at preſent in all *Scotland*; ſo uniformly favourable has that *ſupreme judicatory* been, in all its ſentences, to *patronage* and *preſentations*. But if, on the other hand, we judge by the plain face and aſpect of the *country itſelf*, in the numberleſs *meeting-houſes*, and *places* of *ſeparate communion*, which have ſtarted up during the above period, and which are ſtill increaſing in every corner of the land, by *two*'s and *three*'s after every *Aſſembly*, (a thing utterly unknown in Scotland before); we would rather be inclined to conclude, that the whole *nation* together, (at leaſt all who make any *profeſſion* of religion in it), is on the wing of *ſeparation*, and that in a little there will be nothing left in the *eſtabliſhment*, but an uſeleſs contemned *clergy*, and empty,

deſerted *churches*: our *General Aſſemblies* and *clergy* utterly deſpiſing the *people*, and diſregarding all their *complaints* and *ſeceſſions*;—— and the *people* equally contemning the *clergy* and *General Aſſemblies*, and thinking of nothing, but flying in *troops* from their *tyranny* and *oppreſſion*.

Q. How do you account for this ſingular difference betwixt the preſent and former times;—the *clergy* and *people* now at ſuch open variance, (I had almoſt ſaid, WAR, one with another); whereas formerly they were united together in the moſt indiſſoluble bands of love and unity?

A. Our *General Aſſemblies*, and *clergy*, are made up of *men* of widely different *characters* from theſe of *former times*.——Our preſent *clergy* are all men of *ſenſe*—of *liberal* education—of *liberal* principles—and *liberal* practices.—Men, who have ſeen the *world*,—and have got their *manners* poliſhed to a degree unknown to our *forefathers*.—Men, who have thrown off the *vulgar* prejudices,—and who can *pity* and *contemn* the narrow bigotry of their predeceſſors.——Whereas the clergy of former times were *boors*—*pedants*—illiterate —and illiberal *preciſians*—who affected *popularity*, and chim'd in with the *people*, being themſelves the chief ring-leaders in all their follies.——While on the contrary, a *modern prieſt* is ſtruck, as with a *hydrophobia*, at the very mention of *popularity*, and would be more aſhamed to be thought a popular preach-

er, than a prophane ſw——r, or dr——d, and would count rhe appellation of a *Deiſt*, or even perhaps an *Ath—ſt*, a compliment in compariſon of that of a canting *Calviniſt*.—— So true is the remark of the old poet:

*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur ab illis.*

Which may be engliſhed thus:

*As blows the* wind, *ſo ſtands the* weather-cock.

——It is indeed an old advice of *Cicero*'s to public ſpeakers, *Primum orationis officium eſt, auditorem reddere benevolum et attentum*; i. e. *Every public ſpeaker ought, firſt of all, to endeavour to obtain a favourable hearing*; and as our *clergy* are public ſpeakers, this might ſeem to infer, that they ſhould be, at leaſt, at ſome pains to have a *congregation* to ſpeak to.—But the anſwer is eaſy to this; namely, that the above *advice*, or *rule* of *Cicero*, is at beſt but a precept of *Heathen* rhetoric, which, therefore, can be in no wiſe binding upon a *Chriſtian orator*.—Beſides, circumſtances (which alone can determine the meaning of all general rules), are now quite altered from what they were in *Cicero*'s time. —*Cicero*, and his brother-orators, found it always of great benefit; often of the laſt conſequence, to be in good terms with their *audience*, or *congregation*.—The *people* then had favours to grant, and their diſpleaſure was not wantonly to be incurred.—But it is not ſo

now; and therefore, of courſe, they have loſt their influence.—Where is the favour, pray, now a days, done to a learned, eloquent, and polite *clergyman*, by a parcel of *low rabble*, *plowmen*, *ſhepherds*, or *mechanics*, crowding to his ſermons? A *clergyman* of *taſte* rather looks upon this as an affront.—The favour, if any, is done to themſelves:——and if they are ſo dull and ſtupid, as not to ſee his *merit*; or ſo clowniſh and obſtinate, as not to acknowlege what they do not ſee, let themſelves be the ſufferers.——They may, indeed, withdraw from his *kirk*:—But who, pray, are the loſers here? Their abſence may be good company.——They may deſert his *miniſtry*:—And what of that? They carry nothing with them.——But how ſhall they hear the *goſpel*? Why, they may go and ſeek it where they can find it, (for poſſibly they will not find it with him):——He lays them under no reſtraint.——But what, then, ſhall he do himſelf? Why, juſt *deſpiſe* the *people*, *live* on his *ſtipends*, *attend kirk-courts*, and ſupport the *party* to run down *popular* ſettlements.

Q. Have the people, then, no *ſupporters* at all in our preſent *General Aſſemblies*, or among the preſent *clergy*?

A. There are indeed a *few* hot-headed *incendiaries* among the *clergy*, who ſtill affect to create *diſturbances* in the country, and make a *noiſe* in our *General Aſſemblies*, in ſupport of the *people*'s extravagant *claims*, and in *oppoſition* to the ſovereign ſway of *patron-*

*age*; but their efforts have been ſo feeble, and unſucceſsful hitherto, that they ſcarce deſerve mention.

Q. Pray, how ſtand the *elderſhip* in general affected in this matter?

A. A ſecret lies under this, which the friends of *patronage* are more afraid of, than of all that has happened them for many years; for of truth and verity it is, That the great body of the *elderſhip* in every *ſeſſion* almoſt in *Scotland* are, to a man, ſtaunch *friends* to the *claims* of the *Chriſtian people*, and determined *foes* to the preſent high meaſures of *patronage*; but they have been by the addreſs and policy of our *modern clergy* for many years *lulled* faſt aſleep; being either made to believe that they had nothing at all to do with theſe matters, or that their pretending to interfere would only increaſe the diſeaſe.——But their eyes of *late years* ſeems to be ſome how *opened*:—An unuſual *ſpirit* and *alarm* begins to be ſpread among them:—They, in ſome parts, already, are found to attend on their meetings of *preſbytery* and *ſynods*, as regularly as their *miniſters*; and by *uniting* among themſelves, and *voting* directly againſt their own *clergy*, they carry *cauſes* as they pleaſe, and even ſend *repreſentatives* to the *General Aſſembly*, of the ſame *complexion* with themſelves.—— How far this muſt affect the *intereſts* of the *Patrons*, if it ſhould once become general, He that *runs* may *read*.——A late impudent, pernicious, and ſeditious *pamphlet*, called, *An ef-*

*fectual method for recovering our religious liberties*, publiſhed at *Glaſgow*, and wickedly, and inſidiouſly diſperſed through every corner in *Scotland*, has contributed much to rouze this *ſpirit* among the *elderſhip* and *people*; making the conflagration at once general, by ſetting as it were a torch at the ſame time to the end of every pariſh in the land.——Another ſtill later, but no leſs daring *publication*, entituled, *An alarm to the Church of Scotland*; printed for W. GRAY, *Edinburgh*, ſeems to be equally calculated for *ſpreading* the *growing infection*, and effectually *rouſing* the *people* to attend to their own *privileges*, in oppoſition to the *worldly ſpirit* that *appears* to *prevail* in our preſent *General Aſſemblies*.—And it is ſaid, (upon what foundation I know not), that a certain learned D—r, and *preſent ruler* of this church, has been ſo heartily frightened at the *alarming conſequences* of ſuch a threatening *conflagration*, that he has not thought himſelf ſafe, even on this ſide of the *Tweed*, but has lately fled with precipitation, all the way to *London*, in order to procure effectual *waterworks* to put out the *flame*; and that, if he returns, he is determined, with the utmoſt rigour of law, to proſecute the authors and encouragers of ſaid pamphlets, as wilful-fire raiſers.

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FINIS.